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ABSTRACT

Intended for parents and educators of academically talented students, the newletter presents highlights of the Midwest Talent Search (MTS) project and related information on gifted education. The goals and course offerings of MTS are described, and an address by Julian Stanley to gifted students is summarized. Summer program highlights of the MTS for academically precocious youth (11-14 years old) are described. Coursework capsules cover expository writing, literary analysis, pre-calculus mathematics, and American history. The newsletter concludes with brief information reviews of topics in gifted education. (CL)

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Volume I, Issue 1 — Fall, 1983

Midwest Talent Search Quarterly

A publication of Northwestern University for parents and educators of academically talented students

Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of the Midwest Talent Search Quarterly. The quarterly, published through the office of the Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project, is a publication of Northwestern University for parents and educators of academically talented students. Through its pages, we plan to bring you information of services, programs, and research in gifted education, whether developed by MTS or other organizations nationwide. We view the quarterly as a clearinghouse of resources and information for those concerned about and committed to progress in the education of gifted children.

You, our readers, have diverse needs. Parents of current and former MTS students want information on special programs, services, materials, resources, and financial aid so they can make intelligent decisions on their children's education and future. Teachers of gifted programs at the middle school level need to know the practices and methodologies that work and the resources that are available. Principals and curriculum directors in junior high schools want information on MTS programs and what is happening in the field as a whole. University educators involved in research and the training of teachers need to know about developments and issues in the field of educating the gifted young.

Despite this diversity, our readers share an abiding interest in seeing gifted children reach their fullest potential. The goal of our editor, Harrie M. Hughes, is to reflect that interest and meet your various needs with informative and useful articles. Harrie brings to her task more than 15 years' experience as a professional writer and editor with newspapers and United Press International and as an editorial and public relations consultant, including stints as public relations director for two major health care institutions in Chicago.

She will be joined in this endeavor by Ruthan Brodsky of Michigan who is editor of the Roeper Review and a publications consultant.

Join us on a regular basis as we explore exciting developments in the field of gifted education and search for the practical know-how that can help us all make wiser decisions.

Joyce Van Tassel-Baska

Joyce VanTassel-Baska
Director
Midwest Talent Search Project

Program Highlights

What MTS Is All About

The Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project was founded in 1981 to identify gifted junior high-age students in an eight-state region and to challenge them with special learning opportunities. Gifted students are selected on the basis of mathematical and verbal skills demonstrated in a two-step testing protocol; using test results, MTS matches students with accelerated courses and programs it conducts.

MTS is modeled after a program begun in the 1970s at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. In 1971, Julian Stanley, a professor of psychology, began research at Johns Hopkins to identify and nurture highly talented students at the junior high-age level. His work centered on using the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) to isolate youngsters of exceptional mathematical ability for advanced course work and programs. The success of Stanley's talent search concept led to replication of his methods elsewhere.

The MTS Project at Northwestern University is headed by Joyce VanTassel-Baska, EdD, whose career in gifted education spans the public school, university and governmental sectors as consultant, author and administrator. (Refer to accompanying interview). According to VanTassel-Baska, MTS offers the following benefits to students in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin:

- A more precise picture of students' mathematical and verbal abilities.
- Counseling on academic strengths and suggested course work to be pursued from junior high through senior high schools.
- Information about accelerated and enriched programs and services offered by school districts, regional centers and universities.
- The opportunity to take course work in the humanities, sciences and mathematics at a level commensurate with tested ability. Many students complete advanced work in a third of the normal time.

Any student between ages 11 and 14 who has scored in the 95th percentile or higher in the verbal or mathematical section of an in-grade standardized achievement test can apply to the MTS Project. Applications are available through school principals or by writing the MTS office (Midwest Talent Search Project, Northwestern University, School of Education, 2003 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois 60201). After MTS receives the application and registration fee ($10), it mails out information including instructions for completing the SAT test application form and a booklet to help prepare for the test.

Within six weeks of taking the SAT at a location near their home, students will receive test results and, shortly thereafter, MTS will send a guide describing its program, a summary/interpretation of test scores, and a certificate of achievement. MTS subsequently notifies school districts of test results and special program opportunities.

Based on scores, selected students are invited to participate in an awards assembly at Northwestern in the

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Among other goals, the Midwest Talent Search Project hopes to increase recognition by educators and society as a whole of the needs of gifted students within the school system.

spring. Top-scoring students receive special prizes and scholarships. Students who achieve high SAT scores also are eligible to enroll in academic commuter courses at regional sites, summer residential and commuter programs and correspondence courses. In addition, MTS offers programs for educators, counselors and parents who work closely with gifted children.

Exploring The MTS Experience

In this interview with Joyce VanTassel-Baska, EdD, director of the Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project, she responds to questions about the MTS experience. VanTassel-Baska developed MTS in the south suburbs of Chicago and brought her model to Northwestern University in 1981.

A recognized expert on gifted education with more than 11 years of intensive involvement in the field, she has authored numerous professional publications and made keynote presentations before professional groups. She has been consultant to school districts in more than 30 states and to the state departments of education in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and New York. Her teaching experience includes Northwestern, Arizona State and Purdue universities and the universities of North Carolina and Wisconsin at Oshkosh as well as public high school teaching.

She is a member of the National Business Consortium of Educators on the Gifted and Talented. Among her other professional affiliations are Mensa, the Council for Exceptional Children, the National Association of Gifted Children, the World Council on the Gifted, and Phi Delta Kappa.

Q. What are the most critical needs in the field of gifted education today?

A. The most critical needs facing the field of gifted education today are:

1) A recognition by education and society as a whole of the differential needs of gifted students in the school context.
2) An acceptance of responsibility on the part of educators for providing appropriate programs and services to the gifted population.
3) A coalition of resources at all levels of the public and private sector that would facilitate systematic educational alternatives for the gifted from preschool through graduate school.
4) Adequate funding for research and development projects within the field of gifted education.

Q. Addressing the issue of school programs and services, what is most critical here?

A. Generally schools are not providing advanced curriculum opportunities for the gifted at ages when they are ready for them. In some schools, an advanced curriculum is not available. Opportunities for foreign language, intensive work in writing and literature, and work with scientific processes and mathematical concepts should be occurring for gifted students at the elementary level and beyond.

Another area where the gifted are short-changed is in counseling. Knowing what courses to take and why, understanding differences among universities, and researching possible career options are all essential tasks for gifted students that could be carried out in the context of the school.

Q. Who can best facilitate the growth and development of the gifted?

A. The task of developing high level talent is by its very nature multiple not singular in focus. Certainly teachers who are empathetic to the needs of the gifted and who possess high level abilities themselves in one or more academic areas are important facilitators of talent development. Parents too play a vital role in the process, particularly at early ages by exposing the child to key areas of potential interest and talent, and developing the spirit of inquiry. Practicing professionals in various fields also are important figures in a gifted student's development. Whether it is the musician who teaches the child to make music or the research biologist who instructs in experimental techniques, the presence of an adult/mentor is very helpful in developing talent.

Q. With regard to the Midwest Talent Search, why do you give such a difficult test as the SAT to junior high-age students?

A. It is true that the SAT is normally administered to college-bound seniors. But after 11 years of research, Dr. Julian Stanley, who developed the talent search model at Johns Hopkins University, found that the SAT gauged mathematical and verbal talents of junior high-age gifted students in a manner other measures could not.

Q. What about test anxiety?

A. In general, the 200,000-plus gifted students of junior high age who have taken the SAT during the last 11 years have not experienced test anxiety. It is a good idea, however, for parents and/or school personnel to orient students informally to the test. In its second mailing to eligible students, MTS provides a booklet entitled *How To Take The SAT*. We encourage students to review the booklet and complete the sample test to become familiar with the SAT format and content.

Q. Why is the fast-paced, or accelerative, model used in MTS courses?
A. Dr. Stanley's research showed that highly gifted students require significantly less time to master traditional mathematics content. Later research demonstrated that the same was true for verbal and science content. Gifted students generally can profit from compressing traditional courses into 32 to 75 hours of instruction at younger ages than is considered the norm. This principle has worked for more than 98 percent of the students participating in the Johns Hopkins talent search program, as well as others around the country. Accelerated learning pays off because students receive college credit while still in high school or high school credit while still in junior high school.

Q. Why are MTS course offerings in traditional content fields, not in "enrichment" areas?
A. Talent search programs like the MTS Project deliberately provide content courses that are offered in regular school curricula so that students can advance through those curricula at a much faster rate and gain time for other academic opportunities. The MTS staff believes that the development of academic talent demands proficiency in the basic domains of knowledge. Thus, our programs concentrate on traditional content areas.

Q. What can parents do to help their gifted child?
A. The parents' role in the entire MTS testing and follow-up procedure is critical. Basically, it is the parents who decide if they want their child tested. They also decide on follow-up activities if they opt to have their child tested.

Parents can help in several important ways. For example, they can encourage their child to participate enthusiastically in the testing experience and reassure their child that they will not be disappointed, no matter what the scores.

Second, since their child is at a critical age in terms of course work opportunities parents should monitor course work carefully, making sure the child has all the enriching experiences due him/her based on abilities. For example, students strong in verbal skills should experience a foreign language, preferably before high school.

Finally, parents' encouragement and love will promote the best interests of their child, rather than promoting the child himself. There needs to be a balance between the desire to over-schedule a child's activities and the desire to let the child make all the decisions. Based on skills, a child should take special academic course work, but if the child is not interested or is already involved in a number of extra activities, parents should not force the issue.

Dr. Stanley Addresses Gifted Students

Some 360 top scorers in the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) were invited to an awards ceremony last June on the Northwestern University campus to receive recognition and prizes for their achievements. The gifted students, 55 of whom were awarded academic scholarships as the top verbal and mathematical winners, were joined by parents, staff, and educators of gifted youth from around the country. Keynote speaker was Dr. Julian Stanley, professor of psychology and originator of the talent search concept at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

In saluting the honored students, primarily seventh and eighth graders, Stanley said that a score of 630 on the math section of the SAT means "you reasoned better on SAT-M than 85 percent of college-bound 12th grade males and 94 percent of college-bound 12th grade females. If you scored 580 or more on the verbal section, you are in the upper 10 percent of college-bound high school seniors in reasoning ability."

"We believe that intellectual talent transcends sex, circumstance, and nationality. It requires special educational opportunities," he said, adding that prospects are much better now for society to exercise its responsibility and privilege of nurturing the talents of the intellectually gifted young.

He cited the first talent search in 1972 (which was funded by the Chicago-based Spencer Foundation), involving only 450 students. From "our first, fast-paced mathematics class that year, have grown four other regional talent searches and many special, fast-paced academic programs. This year, every state had access to a talent search, and every qualifying student can choose stimulating courses at a number of residential summer centers," Stanley said.

He discussed two obstacles gifted children face: 1) regimentation—the

emphasis in education from kindergarten through sixth grade of taking particular subjects in a particular grade at a particular age and from seventh grade on of standard time blocks of 50-minute periods per day, five days per week for a school year; 2) educators' conviction that acceleration of virtually any kind is bad for children's social and emotional development.

Of the first point—the emphasis on regimented education—he said, "This is a unit of study set up by an educational commission, not because of its presumed educational value, but in order to have for pension purposes a standard unit by which to identify a full-time teacher vs. a part time one." Of the second point related to the reluctance to accelerate gifted students, he cited research showing no evidence of harm and added, "The intellectual stagnation, boredom and frustration that can result from being incarcerated in a subject far beneath one's abilities year after 180-day school year take their toll of motivation and mental alertness."

He urged talented students to "become your own coordinator of special educational opportunities. Have an agenda of curricular adjustments you must* get, and plan and set up strategies to secure them. Be clever, firm, polite. It's not whether you get the curricular flexibility and articulation you need, but how." He added, "Don't take "No" for an answer, but avoid being abrasive. Work out ways to make the school or school system your ally."

He listed 10 points for gifted youths, their parents and teachers or counselors:

1. Private schools are no simple educational solution for gifted youth due to small classes, the unlikelihood of scheduling flexibility and the tendency to gear classes to students in the 120-140 I.Q. range. Many of the ablest youths work out suitable acceleration in public schools in concert with special educational opportunities.

2. Consider all available educational opportunities in and out of school such as schools' academic clubs and local and state competitions. Plan ahead by saving now for courses to be taken next year.

3. Distinguish between enrichment activities such as the Olympics of the Mind from academic ones such as computer science courses, because sheer enjoyment may not produce educational gain.

4. Residential academic summer courses have value beyond their subject matter in the opportunity they offer to mingle with large numbers of intellectual peers or even superiors.

5. Systematically take college-level examinations offered each May by the College Board's Advanced Placement Program. Nearly all selective colleges and universities award credit for excellent scores on these examinations, and credit for four or five courses will give you college sophomore standing.

6. Move ahead in your specialties regardless of claims that you will have holes in your background. It is easy to take extra studies or seek a mentor to fill in gaps.

7. Take the SAT each year, preferably in January, to measure the growth of your abilities and to plot areas where you need to strengthen them.

8. Take three College Board high school level achievement tests (you get three for the price of one) and try at least six different achievement tests during the next two or three years. You know more than you think.

9. Use your talent for occupational success and happiness; don't sell yourself short by dropping out of graduate training too soon because of the lure of high paying positions.

10. Throughout your schooling, get a fine education. This will be your last systematic opportunity to explore the thoughts and creations of Shakespeare, Freud, Plato, Mozart, Marx, Einstein, Buddha. Impatience to get on with technical matters will make you go through life a craftsman instead of a learned person.

*Underlining is by Dr. Stanley.

Looking Back—And Ahead

The Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project will introduce some innovations in this, its third year, while building on the strengths of the past year. Thanks to the efforts of Richard Wiringa, manager of Northwestern University's information systems office of admissions, financial aid, and institutional relations, MTS will adopt a machine-readable application form to expedite processing.

When the MTS office receives applications for the 1983-84 year, they will be scanned optically for accuracy and completeness; students will automatically receive the MTS mailing explaining the SAT and how to register for it.

This innovation is a necessary outcome of MTS's growth in 1982-83. Last year, the project identified more than 18,000 highly able students in the Midwest. Of these, said MTS director Joyce VanTassel-Baska, EdD, 20 percent scored as well as the average college-bound senior, students at least five years older.

Joyce VanTassel-Baska (left), director of the Midwest Talent Search Project, confers with Wendy Roedell, an educational consultant and a keynote speaker at the MTS institute for teachers and counselors of gifted students.

MTS Holds Institute For Teachers, Counselors

During last summer's Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project institute on the academically precocious, 27 teachers and counselors from the Midwest immersed themselves in the subject of gifted education. The institute's focus was to prepare teachers, counselors, and school administrators for working effectively with gifted students. Topics covered were characteristics of the gifted, curriculum planning, instructional issues, counseling and guidance, and home and community support systems.

Most of the participants, who came from large Midwest cities, attended the institute through a Joyce Foundation grant recently awarded to the MTS Project. The grant funds a two-year project (known as the Education for Disadvantaged Gifted, or EDG Project). The purpose of the EDG Project is to identify academically precocious but economically disadvantaged junior high-age students living in Midwest urban centers and to provide appropriate educational programming for them at both Northwestern University and their home schools. During the institute, teachers and counselors formulated comprehensive, written plans that they hope to implement for EDG Project students in their own school districts.

Institute participants were exposed to a variety of speakers and activities during the four days. Ruth Duskin Feldman, an ex-quiz kid and author of *Whatever Happened to the Quiz Kids?*, spoke on her own experience growing up and the special needs of gifted children in general. Dorothy Lawshe, director of gifted programs for the Gary Public Schools, discussed special issues and concerns surrounding the disadvantaged gifted and described programs she has implemented.

Among other speakers was Dr. Wendy Roedell, educational consultant for the Northwest Education Center, Seattle, Washington. She discussed the need to establish support systems for the highly gifted within the home and community and described linkages that can be made between highly able students and non-school personnel. Dr. Michael Piechowski, assistant professor of counseling psychology, Northwestern University, also discussed the social and emotional needs of the gifted. Georgia Williams, a counselor at Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Illinois, and Lee Baska, a psychologist for the Chicago Public Schools, discussed school counseling and guidance offerings for precocious students.

MTS staff will continue to work closely with participants via telephone and on-site visits during the next two years. The aim is to assist teachers and counselors in providing educational services to EDG students and to tailor their EDG plans to individual students and school settings.

Joyce Grant To Aid Disadvantaged Gifted

The Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project recently received a two-year grant from the Joyce Foundation. The grant will fund academic programs and other services for gifted but economically disadvantaged junior high-age students in Midwest urban areas, according to Joyce VanTassel-Baska, MTS director. In addition, the grant provides for training teachers, counselors and school administrators to work with gifted students.

To be eligible for the Education for Disadvantaged Gifted, (EDG) Project, students must demonstrate high academic potential, as assessed by Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, and come from a low-income family. Students are considered economically disadvantaged if their family's annual income falls within the following guidelines:

Number of Dependents	Income
1	$12,730
2	14,830
3	16,720
4	18,220
5	19,240

Students who are members of families receiving public aid or residing in a federally subsidized housing project also qualify for the program, VanTassel-Baska said.

Academic criteria for the EDG Project are the same as those for participation in any MTS educational program. Students must score at or above 500 on the mathematical portion or at or above 430 on the verbal subtest and obtain 35 or better on the written English portion of the SAT.

MTS will make a variety of educational opportunities available to EDG

students. They can enroll in MTS's summer program at Northwestern University, which provides intensive study of core areas for three weeks. They can also take correspondence courses in Latin, writing, or pre-calculus mathematics, or, if they live near Evanston, participate in commuter courses held on Saturday mornings during the academic year.

As part of the EDG Project, VanTassel-Baska said MTS will help teachers and other school personnel in the students' home schools plan an individualized educational program and monitor student progress throughout junior and senior high schools. Plans will be developed and program alternatives discussed at periodic institutes and seminars, and MTS staff will maintain contact with school personnel via telephone and on-site visits. A seminar series on counseling the gifted, set to begin this fall, will also be available to interested parents and teachers.

To help gauge the project's impact, VanTassel-Baska said participating students will take College Board achievement tests in academic areas where they receive special programming. Attitudinal questionnaires will also be administered to students and parents to assess their perceptions of the project's impact. In addition, teachers and other school personnel will be surveyed on the quality and results of the services and programs provided.

Counseling Workshop Offered This Fall

The Midwest Talent Search Project has announced a series of Saturday workshops on counseling the gifted. The workshop series is designed for school personnel, parents and gifted students in grades seven through 12. It will be held November 5, November 19 and December 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the Evanston campus of Northwestern University.

Each session will feature a keynote presentation followed by audience participation. Workshop topics include:

- November 5, Academic Counselling and Advisement for the Gifted;
- November 19, Psycho-social Issues in Counseling the Gifted;
- December 3, Career Planning for the Gifted.

Fees for the workshop series are: individual, $75; families, $125. Fees for each session are: individual $35; families, $50.

REGISTRATION FORM

Make checks payable to:
Midwest Talent Search

(Please check one)

Workshop Series:_____ (individual)

_____ (family)

Individual sessions:

_____ November 5

_____ November 19

_____ December 3

I am enclosing a check or money order in the amount of

_____for registration.

Mail to: Counseling Workshop Series
Midwest Talent Search Project
Northwestern University
2003 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State _____ zip _____

Telephone _____

Number in your party attending _____

Names of family members attending, if applicable: _____

_____

School District, if applicable _____

Deadline for registration is November 1

Summer Program Highlights

Student Close-up

Brennan Klose

Although he is only 14 and a high school sophomore, Chicagoan Brennan Klose has had some rare opportunities to take the earth's cultural and physical measure.

As the top student in MTS's summer geology course this year, he explored geophysics, geochemistry, geomorphology (study of the earth's surface features) and paleontology with skill and flair. The course was decidedly college-level—advanced enough for any high schooler—but Brennan and his classmates mastered the material in a fast-paced three weeks.

His cultural research has been more leisurely. Along with his family, Brennan spent four years in the Soviet Union. As a foreign correspondent for *The Washington Post*, Brennan's father was named Moscow bureau chief in 1977. The entire family—including Brennan's mother, older sister, Cornelia, and younger brother, Chandler—moved into a guarded compound reserved for foreigners, and Brennan took on the Soviet educational system at the age of eight.

Soviet schooling, he soon learned, is fast-paced. "The Russians condense everything into 10 years, not 12 as we do," he said. Math, in particular, was accelerated. "In Vermont, where we lived for [illegible]rs after returning to the U.S., [illegible] courses were divided into units, such as absolute values and positive/negative numbers. We studied each unit, reviewed it, then went on to the next one. Math in the Soviet system is not segmented like that and there's no time for review," he said. As a result, the pace is quicker, much to Brennan's liking.

The two educational systems vary in other ways. Russian schools operate on a different schedule: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., six days a week. History takes on a definite socialist flavor, claims Brennan, and there's no place in the curriculum for "creative" writing. Russian grammar is strictly that, he says, and Russian literature is confined to studying great Russian authors. "Creative writing, which is emphasized in the U.S., is discouraged in the USSR."

Soviet teaching style revolves around lectures, says Brennan. Students, in turn, are expected to memorize information and repeat it word-for-word on tests. The emphasis on rote memory did not necessarily bother Brennan: "I enjoyed memorizing poetry," he explains.

Extracurricular activities in Russian schools tend to be limited and half-hearted, according to Brennan. If youngsters want to pursue sports, model building, or other activities in depth, they join government sponsored clubs outside the school system. Brennan took part in one of the clubs for model airplane enthusiasts and purued basketball in the school setting.

In the U.S., Brennan is still an avid basketball fan and likes skiing, which he learned in Vermont. He reads widely in the sciences (geology, astronomy, chemistry). He also took to the stage recently. Last year, he played the constable in a school production of "The Music Man" and joined in a Christmas pageant.

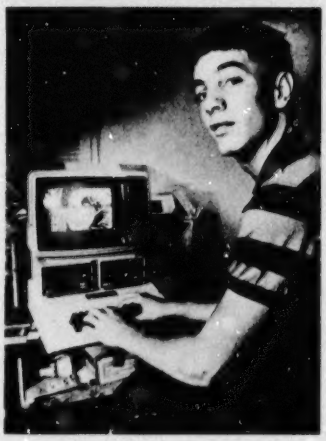
Like many youngsters his age, Brennan feels at ease with computers in a computer era. He took an accelerated computer course in the summer of 1982 and followed up with private tutoring. "I do a fair amount of programming on the Apple II my father bought to write his book on the Soviet Union," he explains.

A strong computer program was one of the reasons why Brennan enrolled in the Chicago Latin School after moving to Chicago late this summer. Beside computer science, his courses include chemistry, French, math, history, and English. A goodly number of those courses are advanced or honors-level.

So far, Brennan is keeping his career options open. But he plans to pursue his interests in geology, math and history well into college.

Brennan Klose, MTS' top student in its summer geology course, feels equally at ease making programs for his computer as making music on his guitar.

Although now living in Chicago, Brennan studied in the Soviet Union school system for four years while his father was a foreign correspondent for The Washington Post.



A Scholastic Summer For The Gifted

Forsaking sunning and swimming for the better part of three weeks last July, 218 bright and motivated youngsters opted instead for challenging their minds and stretching their abilities at Northwestern University's Evanston campus. They had signed up for the Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project's summer program for academically precocious youth, which compresses semesters—even years—of academic work into intensive three-week courses.

These students, aged 11 through 14, are proven high achievers before they set foot on campus. All MTS summer courses require minimal SAT scores for admission, typically 400-430 in verbal skills and 500 in mathematics. Ten-year-old Kristine Haugen of Downers Grove, Illinois, for example, was the youngest girl in the U.S. to score at or above 700 on the math SAT. Instead of choosing a math course, though, she took Latin 1 to boost her verbal skills (she scored 470 on the verbal SAT).

With scores of 700 on both the math and verbal SATs, Doug Wolk ranked as the highest SAT scorer in the 1982-83 MTS group. He chose pre-calculus math with hopes of condensing two years of math into three weeks. Said Doug, "To get into pre-algebra in the East Lansing, Michigan, school I attend, you have to take an algebra test. I took the test and got 100 percent right, but they made me take pre-algebra anyway."

Doug, Kristine, and 216 other residential and commuter students could choose from eight courses in the MTS summer curriculum: pre-calculus math, geology, chemistry, Latin 1 and 2, expository writing, literary analysis, and American history. They pursued their choice five hours a day, Mondays through Fridays, and three hours on Saturdays, as well as in evening study halls.

Benefits of the fast-paced MTS experience are threefold, according to Joyce VanTassel-Baska, EdD, MTS director. The program provides highly able junior high-age students with a rigorous academic environment, she said, in which they have to be willing to work hard and learn to budget their time. Students also get the chance to interact with other, equally bright youngsters. And, third, said VanTassel-Baska, many students get their first flavor of college life during the summer program. They live in college dorms under the supervision of resident counselors, eat in dining halls, and use Northwestern's library and athletic facilities.

Residential students in last summer's program also took advantage of several extras on campus. There were social and recreational events in the evenings and on weekends, like cook outs, films, pizza parties, dances, soccer and board games. Students received 15 hours of computer instruction, and took field trips to Chicago's Art Institute, Shedd Aquarium, and Historical Society. They also attended an evening seminar series on global interdependence in history, economics, law, and political science.

Fittingly enough, the summer program ended, as it began, on a note of high achievement. Certificates of recognition were presented to the top students in each course at a special awards ceremony July 30. Parents, teachers and MTS staff joined in the celebration.

Some 218 gifted youngsters, aged 11 through 14, spent three weeks of the summer exercising their minds at Northwestern University. The students, enrolled in the Midwest Talent Search Project's summer program, studied such subjects as pre-calculus, history, geology, chemistry, Latin and literary analysis.

The Midwest Talent Search Project through its summer program offered gifted youngsters a range of courses. Several courses highlighted by faculty members of the summer program follow:

Expository Writing

by Louise Love and Pat O'Neill-Cerritos

This course introduced MTS summer students to the major essay types: description, narration, definition, classification, analysis, and persuasion. Thematically, the course revolved around the field trips planned for all MTS students: description and narration were emphasized in the week highlighted by a trip to the Art Institute, definition and classification when students visited the Shedd Aquarium, and analysis and persuasion during the week when they toured the Chicago Historical Society.

Students also learned how to write a research paper. The emphasis in this exercise was on narrowing a topic to a central thesis which governed their selection of information and the organization of the paper.

In one of the most popular segments of the course, students were exposed to the skills, techniques and demands of journalism. They were paired with older students who had been studying nothing but journalism as part of Northwestern's National High School Institute, Journalism Division. Each two-person team had to research a prominent public figure in business, sports, politics or show business, write an obituary, and turn in the story under typical news deadlines.

To build self-awareness and analysis, students also learned to revise their work once, twice, even three times. As a final test of their revision skills, they had to take the first essay they wrote for the course (but never revised) and revise it. They ended up making several changes and improvements in the work they themselves had been satisfied with only three weeks earlier.

Literary Analysis

by Brenda Schnede

Using two world literature anthologies, one Shakespearean play, and a novel of their own choice, MTS students explored patterns and cultural similarities in literature, and discovered that the same patterns exist in their own lives. Central to the entire course, in fact, were the study of metaphor and the technique of synthesis.

Literary analysis was conducted in the seminar format typical of grades nine through 12. Course requirements included daily reading, daily written homework, five expository themes, two major essay tests, one oral book review, two reading quizzes, six vocabulary quizzes, and one oral review of three evening seminars on the topic of global interdependence.

By the end of the course, students had mastered about 150 new vocabulary words and 75 literary terms. Because most students already knew the mechanics of good writing, they worked instead on more sophisticated techniques: development of a thesis; subordination and coordination of ideas; organization; use of details, examples, and illustrations; and variety and parallelism in sentence structure.

Pre-calculus Mathematics

by Antoinette Trembinska

This MTS offering exposes students to essentially six courses: algebra 1 and 2, plane geometry, trigonometry, college algebra, and analytic geometry. Students proceed at their own pace through the courses, based on initial diagnostic tests and subsequent mastery of classroom material.

After two 40-minute diagnostic tests on the first day, students were divided into four classes depending on their skills and knowledge. In the third class, for example, each student was placed in an appropriate chapter of the algebra text, *Algebra 2 and Trigonometry*. If the student scored 85 percent or better on a chapter pretest, he could skip ahead to the next chapter. If he scored below 85 percent, the instructor would note what he missed and determine areas of additional study.

Classes were individualized, but students working on the same chapter could also pair off to help each other with new concepts and skills. Since chapter tests were administered by student request, fellow classmates were usually unaware of test scores other than their own.

When all students in the third class completed algebra 1, they took a teacher-developed algebra 1 exam. By the end of the three weeks, many students had also taken standardized Cooperative Mathematics Tests algebra 1, 2, and 3, plus a teacher-developed algebra 2 exam. Those who achieved suitable test scores and mastered classroom material in one or more courses were recommended for placement in the next available course at their home school. If students were close to completing a course, the instructor recommended that they finish the few remaining chapters through an MTS correspondence course.

American History

By Carol Muskin

Teaching the equivalent of a full year of American history to a special group of students in three weeks was a challenge—unlike any previous teaching experience. Decrease the number of days from the 180 in a school year to just 15, cut teaching time from the usual 135 to 67 hours, add 20 adolescents from five states, infuse this setting with a spark of intensity and you then have the Midwest Talent Search summer American history course.

The goals set for the class were unique and flexible: 1. a chronological history from the Colonial period to the present to form a base of knowledge for the students; 2. development of major themes and ideas; 3. historiography, that is discovering historical themes through such tools as research, interpretation of artifacts and art, and reading primary and secondary sources; 4. knowledge of the humanities through an understanding of American literature and culture. The overall goals enabled students to explore history and literature and to develop the skills and tools necessary for their continued learning.

To ensure that all periods of American history were covered, the course was organized chronologically with 11 periods and/or topics covered in the 15 days. Certain years of American history readily were classified into periods as, for example, the Colonial period or the Civil War and Reconstruction. Other times, like from Reconstruction to the beginning of World War I, were grouped topically as, for instance, rural and urban growth, reform movements and imperialism.

A high-powered text, *A People and a Nation* by Richard Hofstadter and Clarence Ver Steeg, provided a chronology of history and superb excerpts from primary and secondary sources. The text chosen provided a highlight of the course with the guest lecture of one of the authors, Clarence Ver Steeg, dean of Northwestern's Graduate School. In addition to the text, extra readings by eminent historians, statesmen, journalists and authors of American literature were selected.

The "collegiate style" class discussion was the primary teaching method used. Each night students read one-to-two chapters in the text, did extra reading of major authors and wrote short essays—studies that prepared students to lead class discussions, draw conclusions, and formulate themes. This teaching technique was enhanced by lectures; projects such as dividing the class into teams representing North and South to debate issues leading to the Civil War; films and such visits as a trip to the Chicago Historical Society.

Students made individual progress by improving their discussion, interpretive and research skills. Through the course, students were introduced to a wealth of literature, documents, historical figures and numerous sources to be explored independently.

Detroit's Gifted Get Enriching Experience

The Detroit Public Schools Summer Institute for the Gifted recently completed its second year. Seventy high-achieving middle schoolers attended two classes of their choice in an intensive, four-week enrichment program. They capped off their fast-paced learning experience with an awards ceremony July 29, where each student received a certificate of achievement.

The 1983 Detroit effort began in the fall of 1982 with a computer search of seventh and eighth grade test scores on the California Achievement Test. Of 730 who scored in the 96th percentile or better on either the math or verbal portions, 330 showed an interest in taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). A third, or about 100, of these achieved 400 or above on either the math or verbal sections of the SAT, said Arthur Enzmann, director of the institute.

The committee formed to discuss follow-up programming offered the following curriculum at last summer's institute: astronomy (including sessions on rocketry and use of a new planetarium), computer math, TV production (students wrote, then acted or directed with state-of-the-art equipment), great books, writing, and games for thinkers.

In addition to the two courses each student enrolled in, students visited the Black Theater Program at Wayne State University. They watched a play rehearsal, attended a performance and met with actors and actresses.

Teachers' salaries and supplies for the institute totaled $9,000, and were funded by contributions from six local firms and organizations, including the United Auto Workers, J.L. Hudson Co., and Stroh Brewery Foundation.

Purdue Offers Summer Programs

Indiana's Purdue University attracted gifted students throughout the Midwest to one of its three residential summer programs. The programs, sponsored by the university's Gifted Education Resource Institute under the directorship of John F. Feldhusen, PhD, were coordinated overall by Ms. Deb Stevenson.

Offered were the Star program, the Purdue Academic Leadership Seminars (PALS) and the Purdue College Credit Program (PCCP). The Star program, under the direction of Elizabeth Nielsen, was in its second year and offered seventh and eighth graders highly accelerated courses in science, math and the humanities. Some 92 youngsters who scored at least 430 in the verbal and 500 in the math sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) attended the two-week program June 11 through 24.

The leadership seminars under the PALS program were directed by Steve Hoover for ninth and tenth graders July 3 through 15. Some 90 students selected on the basis of academic achievement and leadership, as recommended by school teachers and counselors, studied math, science and the humanities. This past summer was the seventh year PALS has been offered.

The Purdue College Credit Program, under the direction of Patty Reilly, marked its third year of giving ninth through 12th graders opportunities to take regular three-credit university courses for credit. The 70 students enrolled July 17 through 31 were selected on recommendations from their schools. Studies included psychology, English composition, history, solar system and computers.

In all summer sessions, "the students made incredible academic gains," Feldhusen said. Results were based on evaluations of parent and student attitudes and by testing students' mastery of content before and after they took each course. Readers interested in specifics of the summer programs are referred to the paper, "Summer Programs for the Gifted" by John F. Feldhusen and Pam Clinkenbeard published this year in the *Journal for Education of the Gifted*.

Feldhusen said Purdue offers 30 to 40 scholarships for its summer programs to students who have been accepted, but show economic need. He anticipates final applications for the 1984 summer will be due sometime in April.

Editor's note: The Midwest Talent Search Program is interested in information of other summer programs.

Abstract

"Profiles of Precocity: The 1982 Midwest Talent Search Finalists," by Joyce VanTassel-Baska, EdD, *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Summer 1983, vol. 27, no. 3. (Reprints are available by writing MTS.)

The author surveyed high-scoring Midwest Talent Search (MTS) Project students to determine what personal, family, behavioral and educational factors may have accounted in part for their high-level test performance. Students scoring 630 or above on the mathematical portion or 580 or above on the verbal section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and having a combined score of 1100 or above were asked to fill out a questionnaire. Results were based on a 64 percent return of 270 eligible students.

Personal Data: There were twice as many males as females in the top-scoring gifted group. The group's favorite leisure-time activity was reading (75 percent): more than 50 percent preferred science fiction, 25 percent fantasy, and 25 percent mysteries, with the classics preferred by only four percent. In addition to reading, other favorite pastimes included individual sports like cycling, tennis, running (50 percent), playing and listening to music (22 percent), videogames (23 percent) and computers (20 percent), indicating the students' tendency toward solitary interests. The author noted a strong relationship between the opportunities students had for special lessons and the interests/hobbies they developed, especially where music, sports and computers were concerned.

Among school subjects, math ranked highest (61 percent) in popularity. Science came second (20 percent) and English third (10 percent). Educational and career aspirations were high. About 46 percent of the gifted hoped to get a doctorate, 23 percent at least a master's, and nearly all a four-year college degree. The largest percentage (24 percent) sought computer-related careers, while 17 percent selected medicine and 14 percent science. When students were asked to cite an outstanding talent or accomplishment, 36 percent chose mathematics, 22 percent music, and a sizable 17 percent listed "none."

Family Data: Half of the students surveyed were the oldest children in two-sibling families. Parents tended to be highly educated. More than 30 percent of the fathers held doctorates, and 76 percent had a four-year college degree. About 64 percent of the mothers had a four-year degree, while only five percent held doctorates. The most common occupations among fathers were: business management (20 percent), professors (15 percent), and engineers (13 percent). Most mothers (44 percent) were homemakers.

Behavioral Data: Parents said their children demonstrated precocity at an early age: more than 80 percent of the students read fluently and more than 30 percent had mastered basic mathematical concepts by age five.

Educational Data: The vast majority (90 percent) of students came from public schools. Only 16 percent ever skipped a grade, even though testing placed them at least five years ahead of their age peers. But 80 percent said they had been involved in some kind of special program for the gifted.

According to VanTassel-Baska, the data revealed some areas of concern: 1) parents' generally negative attitudes toward grade acceleration and 2) their perceptions that current in-school educational provisions for their child's talents were adequate. The author also noted that the failure of 17 percent of the students to list an outstanding talent could indicate a lack of confidence which may hinder further development.

Expert Opinion

What the Experts Are Saying

George Fichter
Educational Consultant, Programs for the Gifted, Ohio Department of Education

I have several observations regarding the Midwest Talent Search and its impact on the services of gifted students in Ohio. First, students have been identified as gifted who would not have been identified for some time. Many schools and districts are involved in the program which do not have the resources to take on an identification program. Second, the attitudes of parents and children involved in the program are positive. This attitude helps to make conditions ripe for introducing new programs in gifted education.

The primary problem in the Ohio area is one of frustration. Now that students have been identified, we find that programs and services to serve them are lacking. There just aren't enough special programs to serve all the qualified gifted. Sometimes, priorities are shifted and a gifted program will be established. It is hoped that there will be more such incidents.

Source: George Fichter, Ohio Department of Education, 933 High Street, Worthington, Ohio 43085, (614) 466-2650.

Bob Geigle
State Director of Programs for the Gifted, South Dakota

The Midwest Talent Search has had a direct and indirect impact on gifted education in South Dakota. For example, many smaller school districts have used the project's results to identify capable math students and to establish special math curricula for these students. As a result, students are in compacted or accelerated math courses or are given time to experiment in math and math-related areas.

Many teachers and parents view the project as another vehicle for reaching students at the junior high level. The results of their scores enables teachers and parents to put these students on a positive course.

In addition, people who never believed seventh graders could score at such high levels on the SAT now are taking a second look at the curricula in South Dakota. Teachers are examining what they require of students; administrators and policy makers are expanding their concepts about the capabilities of students and starting to provide programs for those students who are the most capable.

The project has required that people in South Dakota take another look at their school system. Attitudes about when subjects have to be taught and in what grades are beginning to change. To date, the impact primarily has been restricted to the math area, but I expect repercussions to be felt in other areas soon.

Source: Bob Geigle, State Director of Programs for Gifted, Section for Special Education, Richard Kneip Bldg., Pierre, South Dakota, 57502, (605) 773-3678.

Mary Prentice
Gifted and Talented Education Consultant, Indiana Department of Public Instruction

Indiana has been involved with the Midwest Talent Search Project for only two years, but in that time, it has made an impact on several areas in Indiana's gifted programs.

First, school corporations, which previously had no programs for the gifted, are initiating programs so that students who have been identified as gifted by the project can be served. Second, more colleges and universities are offering summer programs to meet students' needs. The project has dramatized the need, and institutions of higher learning are responding.

In addition, school curricula are changing. It is difficult for parents to institute change, but the Project has demonstrated that students at the seventh and eighth grades need more than what may be offered at the middle or junior high level.

There has been a tremendous increase in communication among the schools, the community and the public in general. For example, a ceremony honoring all students who participated in the search project was held in South Bend. At the award ceremony, 79 students—the highest scorers—received a standing ovation, an indication of acceptance of the importance of their accomplishments.

Source: Mary Prentice, Gifted and Talented Education Consultant, Indiana Department of Public Instruction, Indianapolis, Indiana 36204, (317) 927-0111.

Nancy Mincemoyer
Specialist, Gifted Education, Michigan Department of Education

The Midwest Talent Search Project has had a positive impact in Michigan, because it is a statewide effort that focuses on gifted education. Whether or not schools have programs for the gifted, they at least are involved in or aware of the identification program at the middle school level.

As a result of the project, many summer programs have been established to serve the gifted. Equally important is that the colleges and universities are taking a serious look at students of this age to determine how they can use their resources to provide services for these youngsters and their families.

In brief, the project has helped to create an awareness that there are, in fact, gifted students who have needs—academic and social needs—that may be very different from those that the school system is accustomed to meeting.

Source: Nancy Mincemoyer, Consultant, Gifted and Talented, Michigan State Department of Education, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, Michigan 48909, (517) 373-3279.

Reading

A Handbook for Identifying the Gifted/Talented by Joseph Platow presents techniques and methods for identifying gifted students at all ages and for the six areas of giftedness as federally defined. Instruments for identification are also described. A discussion of the handicapped gifted and the culturally different gifted are included in the book.

Paul Brandwein's *The Permanent Human Agenda: The Humanities* is written as a guide for developing curricula for the gifted. First published as an instrucion guide for elementary teachers, the author's concepts of what constitutes a curriculum invites the reader to reflect on the current emphasis of science and technology in education. (See "The Humanities in a Tech Society, p.x.)

Source: Ventura County Superintendent of Schools, 535 East Main Street, Ventura, California 93009, Attn. LTI Publications.

Legislative News

Computer Literacy Bill Introduced
A bill introduced mid-August by Rep. Timothy Wirth, (Dem., Colorado) would appropriate $3.2 billion in grants over the next 10 years to promote "computer literacy" in schools.

The bill would provide $300 million annually to the Education Department to distribute to states for computer hardware purchases. State departments of education would distribute the funds. Another $20 million annual appropriation would provide grants to states for training teachers and administrators to use computers.

The bill calls for the National Institute of Education and the National Science Foundation to evaluate hardware and software that schools plan to purchase with the grant. The bill has been referred for study to the Education and Labor Committee and the Science and Technology Committee.

$$$Money Matters
The Reagan administration favors extending tax incentives for support of university research, but opposes allowing tax credits for donations of computers and scientific equipment. The Senate Subcommittee on Taxation and Debt Management is considering a bill that would make permanent the income-tax credits to businesses for supporting research and experimentation, including that done at universities. Two bills are designed to encourage training programs for researchers and would also provide increased tax deductions for corporations that contribute computers and scientific equipment to colleges and schools.

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved a fiscal 1984 spending bill providing $1.29 billion for the National Science Foundation. The measure allocates $1.2 billion for research and related activities and $75 million for science education programs. The committee directed that the National Science Foundation spend $34 million for the development of teaching materials and $20.3 million on graduate fellowships. An additional $14.7 million was requested for science education programs that require matching funds from industry.

How Much Math is Enough?

Computers have increased the number of jobs requiring math, as well as increased the level of math needed for many other occupations. Applications of mathematical skills are now being used in the social sciences, the life sciences and in economics, and more occupations will require math skills in the future. Even today, several years of regular high school mathematics often are needed for admittance to higher education, a technical school or a junior college.

For students planning on earning a bachelor's degree, the general rule is "take as much math as possible in school." For science, engineering, and a few social science programs, course requirements include algebra, advanced algebra, geometry, trigonometry and calculus.

It is easier to decide how much math to take if students know what they want as careers. Even for seventh and eighth graders, the solution is to take what may seem to be too much rather than too little math.

Source: *Occupational Outlook Quarterly, U.S.* Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Summer, 1983.

Information Resources

Inventory of Titles
Each year the departments, offices, and agencies of the Federal government prepare and release thousands of publications. These range from small pamphlets to multi-volume reports and abstracts on such topics as education, energy, environment and weather, careers, science and technology, transportation, hobbies and dozens of other subjects. The Superintendent of Documents currently offers an inventory of more than 16,000 titles for sale and 500 subscriptions.

Source: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Dept. 33, Washington, DC. 20402

NICEM Computer Index
NICEM, the National Information Center for Educational Media, is a computer-based index system for audiovisual materials cataloging. Its memory tapes contain information on films, filmstrips, audiotapes, videotapes, transparencies, disc recordings, motion cartridges, slide sets and other non-book instructional materials.

Source: NICEM, University of Southern California, Research Annex-Suite 301, South Hope Street, Los Angeles, California 90007.

SIRS Resource Materials
The Social Issues Resources Series, SIRS, Inc., publishes resource materials dealing with contemporary social issues. It brings together information from magazines, newspapers and government documents and consists of three titles in loose-leaf, index volumes. It is used from the upper elementary grades to the university level. Annual supplements which reflect developments and changes in an issue are published yearly. SIRS is useful for preparing research papers, panel discussions and debates. Titles include: consumerism, ethics, death and dying, human rights, third world, sexuality, pollution, drugs, aging, work and privacy.

Source: SIRS, Inc. P.O. Box 2507, Boca Raton, Florida 33427 (305) 994-0079.

Coalition Exists for the Advancement of Gifted Education

Not long ago, the Federal government disbanded the gifted agency in the Department of Education. A group of people, some of whom were state directors in gifted education and/or officers of national organizations, joined together to form the Coalition for the Advancement of Gifted Education (CAGE). The preliminary thinking of this group was to keep gifted education "in business" at the national level: to lobby, to solicit Federal monies and to communicate the needs of gifted students.

Today, the coalition is a group of national organizations concerned with excellence in education, particularly in recognizing and developing the talents of America's youth. Its mission is to encourage the development of a public which recognizes, nurtures and values gifted youth.

The governing board meets semi-annually in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Council for Exceptional Children, the Association for Gifted Children and the National Association for Gifted Children. Issues are reviewed, goals for the year established and programs planned and implemented.

Source: Department of Human Services Education, The Ohio State University, 356 Arps Hall, 1945 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43210

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